44736-37

Christ's Scepter ADVANC'D,

OR

The Righteous administrations of CHRIST'S Kingdome, set forth for the imitation of earthly Rulers;

In A

SERMON

Preached at the Assizes holden in the City of New *SARUM*, in the County of Wilts on Saturday the 31 of JULY, 1652.

By WILLIAM EYRE, Pastor of a Church in the same City.

I will speake of thy Testimonies before Kings and will not be ashamed, PSAL. 119. 46.

I will make mention of thy Righteousnesse, even of thine onely, PSAL. 71. 16.

LONDON,

Printed by *G. Dawson*, for *Livewell Chapman*, and are to be sold at his Shop at the Crowne in *Popes-head* Ally, 1652.

BRITISH MUSEUM

To the right Honourable the Councell of Warre sitting at WHITE-HALL.

Renowned Worthyes,

YOur Petition of the 12th. of *Aug.* laſt to the Supream authority of the Nation, hath been no ſmall refreſhing to many faithfull people in theſe parts, and more particularly to my ſelf: That in ſo generall a neglect of the publick good (for we may even complaine with the Apoſtle, *all men ſeek their own things*, and with the Prophet. *Every one is for his gaine from his quarter*) there ſhould appear ſuch a ſpirit of righteouſneſſe within the land. We hope the Lord hath not quite forſaken us, but will yet do us good in the latter times, that he will cauſe judgement to run down as waters, and righteouſneſſe as a flowing ſtream.

Phil. 2. 21. Iſai. 56. 11.

Amos, 5. 24.

The Scope of this Sermon (which I preach'd a little before, in a grave and ſolemne aſſembly) was to advance the ſtandard of righteouſneſs within this nation, which I endeavoured to do, by ſetting before our Rulers the righteous Scepter of Jeſus Chriſt; the imitation whereof would make no leſſe for their own honour, than the peace and well-being of this Common-wealth. I then hinted to their ſerious conſiderations moſt of thoſe things, which your Petition ſince hath inſiſted upon. It greatly rejoyced me to ſee thoſe impreſſions upon the hearts of others, which God had engraven on my own ſoule; but more eſpecially on yours (who have been the Saviours of our nation under God) that all men may ſee you have not proſecuted the late warrs, nor attempted the change of our government, from a private ſelfiſh Spirit; ſeeing now whilſt you poſſeſſe the gates of your enemies, and enjoy as much wealth and honour, as heart can wiſh for, you do not every one cry *ſoul, ſoul, take thine eaſe*, &c. but like *Moſes* & *Nehemiah*, have a fellow-feeling of your brethrens burthens, & are ſo affectionately mindful of the publick good, making it your buſineſſe to implore both God and man, for thoſe things which tend unto the peace and wellfare of this whole nation.

Obad. ver. 21.

Luke 12. 19. Exod. 2. 11. Nehem. 1. 4. 2. 3.

To deale faithfully with you, I see not how you could do less; for when I have reviewed many of your letters written, whilst you were abroad in the service, and observed what straines and sparklings of a publick spirit do run through them all, & then considered how little hath been done since you have returned in the prosecution of those things, which then you minded; I feared the reproach of your enemies, that they would say of you, as some did of *Paul* 2 *Cor.* 10.10. *His letters are weighty and powerfull, but his bodily presence is weak and contemptible.* Nay I feared that God himself would awaken you by some terrible voyce; we read that when *Jacob* had vowed a vow unto God, *Gen.* 28.20. what he would do, if God brought him againe unto his Fathers house, and being returned he forgat his vow, the Lord minded him of it as it were by thunder, by severall dolefull accidents that befell his family, *chap.* 34. and then *ch.* 35. he bids him go unto *Bethell* to pay his vowes, as it were hinting the reason of those darker dispensations. But blessed be God that he hath awakened you by a stiller voyce, to remember the purposes of your soules in your low estate, and that you have approved your selves the same in deed, being present, as you were in word by letters when you were absent. 2 Cor. 10.11.

I blesse the Lord for your pious desires to propagate the gospell by gospel-meanes, and for your care to have ministers freed from their servile dependency upon such as are enemies to godlines, for the maintenance of themselves & families, which upon a narrower search will appear to be one of the greatest hinderances of reformation; there are many corruptions that would quickly vanish, did men act in the things of God with a freeer Spirit. A grave Divine, of the late Assembly, in a book newly extant *, hath given us this reason amongst others why ministers ought to baptize the children of ignorant scandalous persons within their parishes, *Because the refusing it would exasperate prophane parents, who are desperate enough already against their ministers, and so prejudice them in their maintenance.* I feare, many other things are continued upon the same account; it is a temptation that is not easily overcome.

* Mr. Cawdry & Mr. Firmin.

Your

Your zeale for civill righteouſneſs, and to have the grievances of the nation ſpeedily redreſſed, will render your names precious unto the generations that are yet to come. The bleſſing of the righteous be upon you and yours *. *See Pro. 11. 27.

The good Lord keep theſe thoughts in your hearts till the things you have deſired ſhall be effected. At the throne of grace, he ſeeks not as he ſhould, that gives over ſeeking before he findes: Waiting is as neceſſary as praying. Importunity hath prevailed with unrighteous Judges *, how much more effectuall will it be at a juſt tribunall? the gracious acceptance and hearty thanks which you received from the great Councell of the land is a ſtrong encouragement ſtill to perſiſt in your juſt deſires. Pſal. 14. 5. *Luke: 18: 4.

Great perſons do look to be put in mind of that, which they themſelves are willing to performe. *Philip* of *Macedon* had a Page to remember him of his duty: The Kings of *Perſia* an Officer to cry Ἄνθρα ὦ βασιλεῦ φρόντιζε πραγμάτων. Herod. l 9. Nay God himſelfe *will be ſought to, for that, which he hath promiſed to do.* The Saints are called his *remembrancers*, Ezek. 36. 37. *Iſai.* 62. 6. and *Chap.* 43. 26. he bids his people *to put him in remembrance*, nay *to give him no reſt*, till he fulfils their deſires; and therefore it cannot be doubted, but that the renewing of your requeſts, will be acceptable to our Parliament, as the granting of them unto the people. Iſai: 62. 7

Worthy Patriots, I am deſired to give to you the hearty thanks of many honeſt, peaceable people in theſe parts, who have mourned for you in your ſtreights, rejoyced with you in your deliverances, who bleſſe the Lord for you, and frequently make mention of you at the Throne of grace; as your former ſervices for the nation, ſo more eſpecially this laſt labour of love, hath exceedingly endeared you to their ſoules. Doe but what you may, to ſatisfie their deſires that hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſſe.

And as a Teſtimony of my unfained affections for your publick merits, I have here preſented you with theſe few meditations, which (I truſt) are the breathings of the ſame ſpirit, which dwels more plentifully in you. The great God did not deſpiſe an offering of goates haire that came from a willing mind; and I doubt not, but your goodneſs will accept the will for the deed, from

Your affectionate ſervant

in our deareſt Lord,

William Eyre.

From my ſtudy in the cloſe o. *Sarum*, *Sep.* 6. 1652.

To

To the Christian Reader,

FRIEND,

I Assure thee, twas not an itch to be seen in Print, that caused me to publish this ensuing Sermon; but some passages therein, having met with a publick censure, I determined to expose the whole to a more publick view, and the rather, because some endeavours have been used to irritate the powers of the nation against me for it, that they, who are concerned in that passage (so much excepted against pag. 24.) *may more deliberately consider both what was spoken, and upon what grounds. As there is nothing in it of my own, that I desire to glory in, so there is nothing that is Gods, that I need to be ashamed of: Thou hast it almost* verbatim *as it was delivered, onely some few things are added, which through streights of time were then omitted.*

There is one thing more I would advertise thee of, that there is a little book lately come forth, intitled the sum and substance of a Sermon preached in *Sarum by Mr.* Woodbridge *of* Newbery, *which doth principally relate to me, for as it was preached in this place to prejudice my hearers and others against my doctrine, (which yet is not mine, but his that sent mee) so it is now sent abroad into the world, to defame my name; the author using his unchristian liberty, not onely frequently to mention me in a vilyfing reproachfull manner, but to publish to the world severall untruthes to make me odious, as that in a publick conference between me and himselfe about the matter of his Sermon,* I would not give him a faire hearing, *p.* 26. 27. *and* that I was above measure obstreperous, *p.* 29. *I professe I could not but wonder at these passages, when I saw them first, not*
Sam. 16. 17. *onely in respect of that ancient freindship, that hath been between*
Psal. 41. 9. *us (never interrupted by any provocation on my part) and for*

that

that I knew my ſelfe clear from theſe foule imputations, having mannaged that conference with as calme and ſedate a ſpirit, as ever I ſpake to my deareſt friend: but in regard this author himſelfe in the cloſe of that exerciſe, had ingeniouſly confeſſed, that I had not wronged him, and can there be greater wrong in arguing than to deny liberty of ſpeech, and not be as ready to hear as we are to ſpeake? but becauſe I expect not credence upon my bare word, thou haſt here a narrative of my carriage in that conference from the worthy Major of this City, and ſome Juſtices of the peace who were then preſent, which alſo (if it were needfull) would be atteſted by the oathes of many more, a teſtimony in a matter of fact beyond exception.

We whoſe names are ſubſcribed, were preſent at the conference between Mr. *Eyre*, and Mr. *Woodbridge* had in *Thomas* Church in *Sarum* about *April* laſt. And being deſired to ſpeak our knowledge concerning the deportment of Mr. *Eyre* in that exerciſe. We do certifie, that his carriage was grave, his ſpeech ſober and moderate, beſeeming both a Chriſtian and a Miniſter; that (as farre as we could perceive) he gave no manner of provocation in word or geſture; neither did he hinder Mr. *Woodbridge* from ſpeaking his whole mind in anſwer to any argument that was urged againſt him, who might have ſpoken more if that he had liſted. In witneſſe whereof we have ſet to our hands this 26th. day of *Aug.* 1652.

Thomas Oviat, Major of Sarum. *Walter South. Nicholas Green.* *William Ludlow. Rob. Pelham*

And as for the cenſures and ſarcaſmes he is pleaſed to beſtow upon me, I cannot ſee, but that his ſtyle would have been as ſmooth and his arguments as ſtrong had he left them out, ſure I am among ſt wiſe men, it will neither commend his cauſe, nor his skill, that he hath betaken himſelfe to ſuch uncivill weapons.

I am not aſhamed to have my name ſeen to that opinion which this author oppoſeth, provided I my ſelfe may be allowed to have

the

the stating of it, for who knows not that it is an easie matter to make any opinion seem absurd, and ridiculous, when the adversary shall frame both objections and answers. Though my great imployment, and frequent sickneſſe affords me little leasure to read, much leſſe to write Books, yet I hope (through Gods assistance) to be enabled to deliver the unweary reader from some dangerous mistakes, in that most fundamentall doctrine of our justification, which this confident author may chance to lead him into. Thou shalt (God willing) receive a more faithfull account of my judgement in those points, than hath been given thee by my adversary; and with as much speed, as my many unavoidable buſineſſe will give me leave.

Thou maist remember what Salomon *tells thee*, Prov. 18. 17. He that is first in his own cause, seemeth just, but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him *, *and therefore suspend thy judgement concerning the issue of this controversie, till thou heareſt further from*

* Venit ſocius & vincit eum. Chald.

Sarum Close,
Sep. 6. 1652.

Thy servant in
the common Faith,
W. Eyre.

A Sermon Preached at the Aſſizes holden in the City of *Sarum*, on Saterday the one and thirtieth day of July, 1652.

PSAL. 45. 6.

Thy throne (O God) is for ever and ever, the Scepter of thy kingdome, is a right Scepter, * Or, *a Scepter of righteouſneſs.* * *Hebr.*

THIS a Maxime amongſt the maſters of morality, that men are ſooner drawn unto virtue by examples, than they are by precepts [a]; and we find that this way of perſwading hath as great approbation in the ſacred pages as in other authors. There is no duty of godlineſſe which belongs either to a Chriſtian's converſation in generall, or to thoſe particular callings wherein God hath placed us, but (to incite and quicken us thereunto) many precious examples are ſet before us, or to uſe the Apoſtles words, *We are compaſſed about with a cloud of witneſſes* [b].

Now this is peculiar to the oracles of God, to afford men ſuch coppies as have no defects, as the example of God [c] and of Chriſt, of whom it is ſaid, that *He did all things well*, *Mar.* 7. 37.

And indeed the moſt perfect and exacteſt examples, ſhould be propoſed to Learners, for though they are with moſt difficulty attained to, yet they are ſafeſt to be followed; mens imitations, like the concluſion of a ſyllogiſme will be ſure to follow the worſer part, and though in good

[a] *Iter ad virtutem longum per præcepta, breve per exempla. Segnius irritant animos dimiſſa per aures. Omnes magis intuentur quid fecerit Iupiter quam quid dicuit Plato, vel cenſuerit Cato.* Aug. *de civ. dei.* l. 2. cap. 7.

[b] Heb. 12. 1.

[c] Epheſ. 5. 1. 1 Pet. 1. 16. Mat. 5. 48. Luk. 6. 36.

actions the tranſcript comes ſhort, yet in thoſe that are evill, moſt times it exceeds the pattern; as the *Iſraelites* are ſaid to have *done worſe than their Fathers*, *Jer.* 7.26. *c.* 16.12. The coppies of the beſt men have their σφάλματα; In the lives of the Saintes wx meet with a great many crooked and miſhapen charracters, inſtances are needles, where there is not one exception; and therefore the great Apoſtle would not challenge from the Churches an abſolute imitation, but onely ſo farre as he himſelfe did walk in the ſteps of Chriſt. *Be ye followers of me, even as I alſo am of Chriſt.* 1 *Cor.* 11. 1.

[d] *Inſcriptis ſapientum nulla litura. Hebr. Proverb. apud Druſ.*

In this coppy there is *nulla litura*[d], no blot or blurre to be eſpied; he never did any thing *amiſſe*, [e] *Luke* 23. 41.

[e] 1 Pet. 1. 19. Heb. 7. 26. 1 Pet. 2. 22, 23 2 Cor. 5. 21. Heb. 4. 15. Ioh. 8. 46.

We read of our Saviour, *Matth* 7. 29. that *He taught the people as one having authority, and not as the Scribes.* 'Tis noted of the Scribes and Phariſees, that *they ſaid but did not*, *Matth.* 23. 2. they taught the truth, which they did not practiſe; Now this derived no ſmall authority to our Saviours doctrine, that all his Sermons were legible in his life, and his hearers might ſee them repeated in his converſation; his manner of teaching was not like other mens, you muſt do this, or you muſt do that; but *Learn of me*, &c. *Matth.* 11. 29. and *I have given you an example that you ſhould do as I have done*, *Joh.* 13. 15.[f]

[f] Like Cæſars language to his ſouldiers, *Ignave, venire te Cæſar, non ire jubet.*

His life was a univerſall example of true holineſſe and may ſerve us as a glaſſe, not onely in thoſe duties which do concerne us as Chriſtians, in which reſpect we are exhorted, *to look unto Jeſus*, Heb. 12. 2. *to have the ſame mind which was in Chriſt Jeſus*, Phil. 2. 5. *to follow his ſtepps.* 1 Pet. 2. 21. *to walke even as he hath walked*, 1 Joh. 2. 6. In a word *to be holy in all manner of converſation, as he which hath called us is holy.* 1 Pet. 1. 15. But in all our particular callings, in our 1. *Oeconomicall.* 2. *Politicall.* And 3. *Eccleſiaſticall* relations.

1. Husbands are ſent to him to learn their duty; *Husbands love your wives, even as Chriſt loved the Church*, *Eph.* 5. 25. Children may learn obedience, for he was ſubject to his Parents, *Luke* 2. 51. Servants may learn faithfulneſſe,

neſſe for he was faithfull to him that appointed him, &c. *Heb.* 3. 2.

2. Miniſters may learn of him too, how tender and compaſſionate they ought to be to the ſoules of their people, how diligent and indefatigable in the work of teaching [g], how exemplary to their flocks, *in word, in converſation, in charity, in ſpirit, in faith, and in purity.* 1 *Tim.* 4. 12.

[g] Mat. 9. 35, 36. Luk. 13. 22.

3. Magiſtrates and rulers may here learn their duty, for he hath given them an example alſo, that as he in his kingdome, ſo they in theirs ſhould rule in judgement and equity, and that their ſcepters ſhould be like to his, *ſcepters of righteouſneſſe.* And verily they would learn of him, and mannage their power after his example, if they knew the things which belong to their peace, for tis *righteouſneſs that exalts a nation* Pro. 13. 34. *By righteouſneſſe is the thron eſtabliſhed.* Pro. 25. 5. and *By ruling in righteouſneſſe ſhall their peace and tranquility be lengthened forth.* Dan. 4. 27. From hence it comes to paſſe that Chriſts kingdome is an everlaſting kingdome, that tis not ſubject to ſuch mutations and viciſſitudes as the kingdomes of the world are. His throne is for ever, and ever, becauſe *the ſcepter of his Kingdome is a ſcepter of Righteouſneſſe.*

Providence having called me unexpectedly [h] to be your Remembrancer, I caſt with my ſelfe for ſome ſuch word, as *Solomon* compares to *apples of gold in pictures of ſilver*, Pro. 25. 11. having learned from *Cyprian, Plus proficitur cum in rem præſentem venitur*, that words in ſeaſon are moſt profitable [i]. Theſe words that I have read did firſt offer themſelves unto my thoughts, which I dare ſay are as ſuitable to theſe times, and to this aſſembly, as any other throughout the Bible.

[h] The Sheriffe came to me on the munday before, told me he was diſappointed of a Miniſter to performe this work and earneſtly defired me to undertake it.

[i] Eccl. 12. 10.

Righteouſneſſe was never more needfull to be preſſed, than in the times we live in, when the cries of unrighteouſneſſe throughout the nation are ſo loud and many, and the rather, becauſe the neglect of it at this time doth caſt ſuch an odious blemiſh upon Religion, and the work of reformation that hath been endeavoured. Sure I am they that are willing to do their duty (as I believe you are) will not be unwilling to heare of it, and to be excited and quickned

thereunto. For my own part I know no argument ſo powerfull to provoke men unto civill righteouſneſſe as the righteouſneſſe of the Goſpell which we are ſent to preach, nor any pattern ſo deſerving the imitation of Rulers, as the righteous adminiſtrations of Jeſus Chriſt. I dare ſay, were his kingdome better known in the world, did his Scepter rule in the hearts of men, the names of oppreſſion and unrighteouſneſſe would not be heard of.

The ſpreading and ſetting forth of this righteouſneſſe will be found the moſt effectuall reformer of States and Kingdomes. There is but little hope to ſee righteous governments here on earth, or that *Magna imperia* will be any other than *Magna latrocinia*, untill *the kingdomes of men* [k]Rev. 11. 15. *do become the kingdome of the Lord*[k], and the Rulers of the world do ſtoop their necks unto his Scepter. Did men but ſee the luſter and glory of Chriſts kingdome, the riches and treaſurs of his righteouſneſs, it would quite darken the glory of the world, and turn away their eyes from beholding [l]Pſ. 119. 37. vanity[l]. It would raiſe up their hearts to the higheſt deſigns both for God and the publick good. In a word, it would make them much more zealous and fruitfull in all duties of mercy and righteouſneſſe towards men; But I fear that I have held you too long in the porch or entrance.

The argument of this Pſalm is wrapt up in the Title, the Pſalmiſt calls it שִׁיר יְדִידוֹת a ſong of loves or a marriage ſong, 'twas compoſed on purpoſe to celebrate the nuptialls of Chriſt and his Church, for though in the type and figure it doth point to *Saloman*, to congratulate his marriage with *Pharaohs* daughter, yet doubtleſſe the pen-man, at leaſt the *Holy Ghoſt*, (who guided his hand) had a higher reach, *viz.* to ſhadow forth the myſterious [m]Vide *Revit.* arg. in Pſal. 45. union of Chriſt with Saints[m]. For beſides the authority of the Apoſtle, who applies ſome parts of the Pſalm unto Jeſus Chriſt, *Heb.* 1. 8, 9. there are many particulars which cannot properly be meant of any other; to look no farther than this verſe, how can *Salomons* Throne be ſaid to continue for ever, who raigned in all but forty yeares, Eph. 5. 32.

2 *Cron.*

2 *Chron.* 9 30? Or how ſhall his Scepter be called a Scepter of righteouſneſſe, who grieved his Subjects with ſuch heavy burthens, 2 *Chron.* 10. 4? Neither can it be ſaid of *Solomon*, that *He loved righteouſneſſe*, and *hated iniquity*, who fell into ſuch horrible ſinnes as we find he did.

And as for the next clauſe *Thy God hath annointed thee with the oyle of gladneſſe above thy fellowes*; it cannot poſſibly be applyed to any other, but unto him *who received the Spirit without meaſure*, Joh. 3. 34.

And therefore ſome good Divines [n] have thought, that this Pſalm doth not relate to *Solomon* at all, no not ſo much as a type of Chriſt. Nay, ſome of the *Rabines* [o] have acknowledged, that the *Meſſiah*, and not *Solomon*, is the principall ſubject of this Pſalm, and therefore we will take it for granted, that this *Epithalamium* doth belong unto Chriſt, that it ſets forth that ſpirituall myſticall marriage between him and his Church.

[n] *Bez.* in Heb. 1. 8.

[o] Vide *Rivet.* ut ſup. & Eſtium in Heb. 1. 8.

The whole Pſalm is beſtowed in deſcribing the glory and perfections both of the Bridegroom and the Bride.

1.

The Bridegroom is commended; firſt, for his Tranſcendent beauty, Thou art fairer, &c. the ſame word is doubled in the Hebrew, thou art fair, thou art fair (*q. d.*) thou art infinitely fairer than the ſonnes of men, I am even raviſh'd with thy beauty, 'tis not meant of the externall corporall feature (which the Scripture no where mentions [p]) but of that beauty which is internall and ſpirituall, his perfect mediatoriall righteouſneſſe, that communicative beauty which he puts on his Spouſe, [q] in which reſpect (ſaies *Luther*) *Unus pilus, una guttula Chriſti eſt purior ſole*, one hair, one drop of Chriſt excels the Sun.

[p] 'Tis obſervable that none of the Evangeliſts (though very preciſe in ſetting down other circumſtances) have expreſſed any thing at all touching his complexion, feature, or ſtature, happily to this end, that no picture or ſtatue might be made of him. Dr. *Hacw. Apol. l.* 3. *c.* 4. *ſ.* 2.

Secondly, For his gracious ſoul-raviſhing doctrine (*Grace is poured into thy lips*) in Cant. 5. 13. *His lips are* compared to *Lillies dropping ſweet ſmelling Myrrh*, the lips are uſually put for ſpeech and doctrine; this clauſe hints to us the great difference between the Law and the Goſpel, the Doctrine of Chriſt, and the doctrine of *Moſes*, *the Law came by Moſes, but Grace and truth by Jeſus Chriſt*, Joh. 1. 17. From *Moſes* lips there drops nothing but Gall and Wormwood;

[q] Ezek. 16. 14.

2.

wood, but out of Christs lips proceed words sweeter than the Honey, or the Honey-comb; *the people wondred* (saies the text) *at the gratious words which proceeded out of his mouth*, *Luke* 4. 22. the comfort and sweetnesse of the Gospel to them that doe believe cannot be expressed in words.

[1] Ps. 119. 103. Iob. 23. 12. Isai. 25. 6.

3. Thirdly, For his invincible fortitude and power in conquering and subduing his enemies, 3, 4, and 5. verses, all his weapons prosper which he formes against them, like the Swords of *Saul* and *Jonathan*, which returned not empty, 2 *Sam.* 1. 22.

4. A fourth branch of his description is here in the sixth verse, where he comes to set forth the glory and excellency of Christs Kingdome, how wonderfully it excels the kingdomes of men: where we have to consider:

1. First, The Office or dignity that is ascrib'd unto him, Thy Throne O God, &c. A Throne and a Scepter are sufficiently known, to be *ornamenta regia*, the badges and appendices of regall dignity: Both in sacred and other Authors, a Crown, Throne, and Scepter are usuall metonimies for Kingly power. So then these words, *thy Throne* and *thy Scepter* doe plainly intimate, that Christ is a King, or that he hath a Kingdome. He is not onely Priest and Prophet, but Lord and King, so the Apostle, *Act.* 2. 36. God hath made this Jesus both Lord and Christ, and *Phil.* 2. 9. God hath highly exalted him &c. There is a twofold Kingdome that Christ hath right to, the one is his 1. *Regnum naturale*, his naturall Kingdome, which belongs to him as God equall with the Father; the other is his 2. *Regnum acquisitum*, his mediatory Kingdome, which belongs to him as God-man and Mediator, whereof he himself speakes, *Joh.* 18. 36. My Kingdom is not of this world; He doth not say, my Kingdome is not in this world; but that it is not of this world (*i.e.*) it is not a worldly Kingdome, or administred in the manner of other Kingdomes, it hath not that pomp and bravery that the Kingdomes of the world have: of this Kingdome are the words of the Psalmist to be understood.

Secondly,

Secondly, The nature and quality of this Kingdome, which is deſcribed to us by two properties which belong peculiarly thereunto; 1. *Perpetuity*: And 2. *Righteouſneſſe*. 2.

The firſt is the *Perpetuity* thereof, his Throne is *for ever and ever*: The *Jewes*, who apply this text onely to *Solomon*, will have the words עולמועד to ſignifie no more than (a great while or a longer ſpace) as the time of *Solomons* raign, which was forty yeares; Indeed the word עולם when it is put alone is uſed *Periodically*, ſometimes for ſuch an age or Period of time, as that ſpace from the Creation to the Law, and from the Law to the coming of the *Meſſiah*, thus the Leviticall Prieſthood is ſaid to be *a ſtatute for ever*, Exod. 28. 43. (*i. e.*) till the coming of Chriſt, for then it vaniſhed: ſometimes but for the time of a mans life, *Deut.* 15. 17. 1.

But when עד or עדי is added, when theſe ſynonimaes are put together the ſignification is hugely [f] extended, they note either abſolute eternity, which belongs onely to God who hath neither beginning nor ending, *Pſal.* 10. 16. or ſuch a duration as runnes parallel with time, which ſwallowes up all other *Periods* and changes in the world, and hath no other age that ſhall ſucceed it.

[f] *In immenſum auget orationis pondus.*

Now when everlaſtingneſſe is aſcribed unto Chriſts Kingdome, as here and in other places, [t] it muſt be underſtood in the latter ſence; 'Tis not abſolutely eternall, without beginning or end, for the Scripture witneſſeth it ſhall have both: In *Dan.* 2. 44. 'Tis ſaid to be erected or ſet up in the dayes of thoſe Kings (*i.e.*) during the Roman Monarchy; It is true, he was King as ſoon as Prieſt or Prophet, he executed all the offices of his Mediatorſhip from the very beginning, though not ſo conſpicuouſly and powerfully as after his reſurrection. And 1 *Cor.* 15. 24. we read, *that at the end of all things, Chriſt ſhall deliver up the Kingdome into the hands of God, even the Father,* there ſhall be no longer any need of this Mediatory Government, when the elect are all called, and all enemies ſubdued; when ſinne ſhall be quite aboliſhed, not onely in reſpect of non-

[t] Iſai. 9. 7. Dan. 2. 44. 7. 14. Mich. 4. 7. Luke 1. 33. Rev. 11. 15.

non-imputation, but of in-being, then I ſay there will be no need of a *Mediator*, but God ſhall be all in all; the Saints ſhall have immediate acceſſe to God, and God will communicate himſelf immediately unto them.

His Throne is ſaid to be *for ever and ever*, onely in a qualified ſence, it ſhall continue as long as the world laſts, till all Kingdomes and Scepters are reſign'd into the hands of God. Chriſt ſhall raign in the midſt of his enemies, his Kingdome ſhall remain impregnable, notwithſtanding all the attempts and oppoſitions that are made againſt it, *Pſal.* 2. 6. 89. 36, 37.

2. The ſecond property which is here aſcribed unto Chriſts Kingdome is *Righteonſneſſe* and *Equity*, The Scepter of thy Kingdome is a right Scepter: a right or a ſtrait Scepter notes an upright and righteous Government. This branch of the text reſpects the manner of his Government, and this I had chiefly in my eye when I pitched upon this Scripture; Now here theſe two points are obvious to be obſerved.

The firſt we ſhall gain from the property it ſelfe, That *all the adminiſtrations of Chriſts Kingdome are juſt and righteous*, his Scepter is a right Scepter.

The ſecond, from the confinement and reſtriction of this Property to him alone, *Righteouſneſſe is proper and peculiar unto the Kingdome of Jeſus Chriſt.* This word (*Thy*) is not onely incluſive but excluſive, it excludes all other Kingdomes and Governments in the world from ſharing in this honour. The Scepters of other Kings [n] are but crooked Scepters, bended to mens wills, luſts, and politick deſignes; the beſt Governments here on earth are guilty of much injuſtice and oppreſſion. Tis the Prerogative of Chriſts Kingdom alone, to be *a habitation of Righteouſneſſe*[*]; If the time permit we will ſpeak to both.

[n] *Cætera regna, quanquam ſint felicia & bene conſtituta, tamen habent infinita vitia, mixta ſunt tyrannide, inſipientia, negligentia, omnibus cupiditatibus gloriæ, libidinis, vindictæ, avaritiæ.* Luth. enar. in Pſal. 45. [*] Ier. 31. 23.

The

The firſt Point we ſhall offer to your attentions is,

That all the adminiſtrations of Chriſts Kingdome are juſt and righteous. *The firſt Doct.*

The Lord Jeſus is a righteous King; In his Kingdome there is no unrighteouſneſſe, no reſpect of perſons, no perverting of judgement, the poor are not oppreſſed, nor the wicked juſtified. That maxime of our late king-flatterers holds true in Chriſt, *This King can doe no wrong unto his Subjects.*

He is the true *Melchizedek*[x], or King of *Righteouſneſſe*; the Prophets who ſpake aforetimes of his Kingdome, doe place the glory of it in his righteous dealings. *Behold a King ſhall raign in righteouſneſſe, &c.* Iſai. 32. 1. *With righteouſneſſe ſhall he judge the poor, &c.* Iſai. 11. 4. and verſe the 5. *Righteouſneſſe ſhall be the girdle of his loines*; ſee Jerem. 23. 5. Pſal. 89, 14. 96 10. The Saints that have lived under his Scepter doe with one conſent bear witneſſe to this truth, *Rev.* 15. 3. 16. 7. the Spouſe, *Cant.* 5. 11. deſcribes him with *a head of gold*, the headſhip and government of Chriſt hath no ſuch prophane mixtures as are in other kingdomes. [x] Heb. 7. 2.

The righteouſneſſe of Chriſts Kingdome might be demonſtrated many wayes.

As firſt, From the Perpetuity and continuance thereof, his Kingdome could not be for ever were it not adminiſtred with righteouſneſſe; Injuſtice is the bane and ruines of kingdomes, Tyranny and Oppreſſion is never long liv'd, as *Athanaſius* ſpake of *Julian, Nubecula eſt & cito tranſibit*; Chriſts Throne would not be for ever, were not his Scepter a righteous Scepter. 1.

Secondly, From the purity of his nature; men are unrighteous, becauſe their natures are corrupt and ſinfull, their hearts are filled with all unrighteouſneſſe[y], as with pride, ambition, covetouſneſſe, &c. which doe ſtrongly tempt them to unrighteous dealings; but now in this King there is no ſuch corrupt byas, his nature inclines him to 2. [y] Rom. 1. 29.

deal uprightly; he loveth righteouſneſſe, and hateth iniquity; The word אהב implies ſtrong and vehement deſires, his heart is naturally and unalterably ſet upon it. Rivet. in loc.

3. Thirdly, From his abſoluteneſſe and independency, he is not ſubject to any of thoſe temptations which doe prevail with men, he hath no ſuperiour, whoſe diſpleaſure he needs to fear, there is no gain or advantage that he can hope for by dealing unrighteouſly: In a word, injuſtice is the effect of impotency, it would derogate from his power and almightineſs, to deal unjuſtly. 4.

The righteouſneſſe of Chriſts Scepter will be much more conſpicuous, when we ſhall have conſidered his proceedings, both 1. with his ſubjects. And 2. With his enemies, for towards each he is *righteous in all his wayes, and holy in all his works*, Pſal. 145. 17.

His righteous adminiſtrations in reference to the Saints will appear by conſidering; Firſt, what he hath done for them. Secondly, what he works in them: And thirdly, how he carries himſelf towards them.

1. As for the firſt, ſuch was his zeal for righteouſneſſe, that to make them *righteous* he was content himſelf to be made a *ſinner*[z]; ſo the Apoſtle, *He was made ſin for us, that we might be made the righteouſneſſe of God in him*, 2 Cor. 5. 21. And in another place, *He was made a curſe for us, to redeem us from the curſe of the Law*, Gal. 3. 13. ſee c. 4. v. 4, 5. That Gods righteous Law might receive no dammage, he would become *their ſurety*[a], take their ſinnes upon himſelf[b], and be offered up a ſacrifice[c] to ſatisfie offended juſtice in their behalf, whereby of ſinners they are made righteous, yea, as perfectly *righteous, as Chriſt the righteous* 1 *Joh.* 3. 7. Now the good Lord open all our eyes, to ſee the reall and glorious excellency of this priviledge. The full ſoul (ſaies *Solomon*) loathes the honey-comb, *Prov.* 27. 7. they that never felt the heavy load of ſinne, nor the ſmart of a wounded conſcience, cannot prize it, they ſee no need of this righteouſneſſe; but to the true believer tis more pretious than rubies, *&c. Prov.* 3. 14, 15. he cannot

[z] σφόδρα ἁμαρτωλὸς &c. Oecum: in Hebr. 9. ult. *Maximus peccatorum* Aug. *de Roma in Concil. Baſil. ſeſſ.* 22.
[a] Heb. 7. 22.
[b] Iſai. 53. 6.
[c] Epheſ. 5. 2.

not but cry out with the Pſalmiſt, Bleſſed are they whoſe iniquities are forgiven, and to whom the Lord imputes no ſin, *Pſal.* 32. 1, 2. I could willingly ſpend the reſidue of our time in this argument: we will give you but a glimpſe of it in two or three particulars.

Firſt, The ſoul that hath this righteouſneſſe put upon him by Gods gratious imputation, hath all his ſinnes covered and hidden from the ſight of God, the eye of divine Juſtice ſees not the leaſt ſpot[d] of ſin or iniquity in thoſe that are clothed with it, the Saints through his death are preſented *holy, and unblameable, and unreproveable in his ſight*, *Coloſſ.* 1. 22. here every word is emphaticall, he hath made them (ſaies he(1. ἁγίους without any defilement. 2. ἀμώμους [e] ſuch as the moſt ſevere and curious eye can find no fault in them. 3. ἀνεγκλήτους [f] free from all ſuites and moleſtations about their ſinne, no action or accuſation can be commenced againſt them, and all this is 4. κατενώπιον ἀυτοῦ before, or in the ſight, not of men, but of God, God, whoſe judgement is according to truth, can find no cauſe to proceed againſt them; according to that of the Prophet, *The iniquity of Iſrael ſhall be ſought for, and there ſhall be none*, Jer. 50. 20.

[d] Ephes. 5. 27.

[e] *Momi morſibus non obnoxius.*

[f] *Quinjus vocari nequit.*

Secondly, The ſoul that hath this righteouſneſſe is freed and diſcharged from all the conſequences of ſin, from all thoſe evils and penalties which his ſin deſerves. *There is no condemnation* (ſaies the Apoſtle) neither temporall nor eternall puniſhment *to them that are in Chriſt*, that are clothed and arraied with his righteouſneſſe, *Rom.* 8. 1. this followes neceſſarily from the former propoſition, for all know, that if the body departs, the ſhadow that attends the body removes alſo; if the debt be diſcharged, the priſon is diſcharged; ſo if ſin be done away, the conſequents of ſin muſt ceaſe; I am ſure tis Proteſtant divinity, *Remiſſa culpa, remittitur peccatum*; and *Juſtificatio tollit omnia pœnalia.* Though many things which were originally the conſequents of ſin doe befall the faithfull no leſſe than others, as ſickneſſe, pain, death, &c. yet as unto them their nature is quite changed and altered, of diſeaſes there are made

medicines, of enemies friends, of things hurtfull they become good and profitable[g].

[g] 1 Cor. 3. 22. Ier. 24. 5. Hebr. 12. 10.

Thirdly, This priviledge is not onely negative, but positive, as they are uncloath'd and stript of their own filthy garments[h], so they are cloath'd upon with the immaculate robe of Christs righteousnesse, a righteousnesse adequate, and commensurate to the Law of God; by the obedience of one (saies the Apostle, *Rom.* 5. 19.) many are made righteous, (*i. e.*) perfectly and compleatly righteous, more than if they had kept the Law in their own persons; hereby we come to have boldnesse and confidence in the sight of God, his infinite purity and holinesse doth not daunt or discourage us from going to him; for as Christ is before him, so are all they that doe believe in him, through that righteousnesse of his that is put upon them, see *Ephes.* 3. 12. *Rom.* 5. 2.

[h] Zach. 3. 4.

Fourthly, It is an abiding everlasting righteousnesse, *Heb.* 9. 12. *Dan.* 9 24. It shall never be taken from them that are clothed with it. It is a certain truth, *peccata non redeunt*, subsequent sinnes and falls doe not nullifie and evacuate former grants and pardons, they that are once justified can never be unjustified; there shall never enter so much as one hard thought into the heart of God against them, either utterly to cast them off, or to take revenge of their renewed falls. But I fear to trespasse upon your patience.

2. Secondly, The righteousnesse of Christ's Scepter is manifest from the righteousnesse which he works within them; Tis *Sceptrum cum unctione*, such a Scepter as hath an heavenly annoynting[i] accompanying it, which purifieth their hearts, mortifieth their earthly members, sanctifieth them throughout, who are brought under the power of it. This King will have his Subjects to be like himself, he transformes and changeth into his own image; The grace he hath given them teacheth them to deny ungodlinesse and worldly lusts, &c. *Tit.* 2. 11, 12, where it workes not these fruits we may certainly conclude, it is neither known[k] nor believed; *They that have not the Spirit of Christ* in some good

[i] 1 Joh. 2. 20, 27. Acts 15. 9. Col. 3 5. 1 Thes. 5. 23. 1 Pet. 1. 15, 16. 2 Cor. 3. 18.

[k] 3 Ep. Joh. v. 11.

good meaſure, to ſanctifie them both in ſoul and body *they are none of his*[l], they are not yet his ſubjects, though they are profeſſors, they are not believers, their ſeeming religion is but a meer form of godlineſſe, like theirs, *Mat.* 7. 22, 23. 'Tis as poſſible to ſeparate light from the ſun, and heat from the fire, as an endeavour after holineſſe from true faith; *Every man* (ſaith Saint *John*) *that hath this hope purifieth himſelfe, even as he is pure*: 1 Epiſt. 3. 3. though this work of ſanctification be not perfect in any here in this life, yet whereſoever it is in truth, it ſtill growes and increaſeth, even as the light which ſhineth more and more unto the perfect day. *Pro.* 4. 18. ſee *Job.* 17. 9. *Pſal.* 84. 7. *Pſal.* 92. 12.

[l] Rom. 8. 9.

Thirdly, the righteouſneſſe of Chriſts Scepter is ſeen in all his dealings, and carriage towards them; he hath all the properties of a gracious King; they did never meet in the moſt admired Prince, as they do in him. 3

Firſt, He imployes all his power and authority for the weale and benefit of his ſubjects: Herein lies the principall difference between righteous and unrighteous Rulers; Tyrants have no other end but themſelves, the carrying on of their ambitious projects and deſignes, the raiſing of themſelves and families, though it be to the utter ruine and deſtruction of their people; whereas a righteous king conſiders, that Kings are for their Kingdomes, and not Kingdomes for the luſts of Kings. Rulers were not ordained of God ſo much for their own ſakes to domineer at their pleaſure, as for their people. *The Magiſtrate* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *is the Miniſter of God to thee for good*[m]; not for his own gaine and advantage, but for the good and wellfare of thoſe that are under him. The light of nature doth teach men this, that the good of the people was the end of government[n], and ought chiefly to be minded by all that do bear rule, and the Emperour *Adrian* that he might not forget it, gave it for his motto or inſcription, *Non mihi ſed populo*, I am not for my ſelfe, but for my people: Such a King is the Lord Jeſus, *He is head over all things for his Church*, *Epheſ.* 1. 22. in all his actions and adminiſtrations he 1

[m] Rom. 13. 4.

[n] ἡ ἀρχὴν μὴ εἰς ὕβριν ἀλλ' εἰς ἐνεργείαν καταστῆσαι *Ariſt.* in Ep. ad *Alex.*

he intends their good, he never rejoyced in any thing but what did make for their advantage, *Luk.* 10. 21. *Joh.* 11. 15, 17, 19. *T'was for their ſakes that he entred into his glory. Joh.* 16. 7. 14. 2. In all his diſpenſation tis his chiefe deſign, he neither doth, nor will ſuffer ought to be done unto them, but for their good and profit, *Rom.* 8. 28. *Heb.* 12. 10. He orders every wind to fill their ſailes, their very croſſes and afflictions to further their eternall wellfare.

2 Secondly, he proportions their ſtrength unto their ſervices, inables them to performe whatſoever he commands to be done, he will neither ſuffer them to be tempted, nor yet to be imployed beyond their power o. This is another Character of a righteous King, not to load or weary out his ſubjects with heavy burthens, like *Pharaoh*, who doubled the bricks, but would allow no ſtraw; I have read of *Julian*, that he was very ſparing to lay taxes and tributes on his people, accounting the hearts of his ſubjects his greateſt treaſure. This property is eminent in this King of Saints, his yoke is eaſie, and his burthen light, *Matth.* 11. 30. 1 *Joh.* 5. 3. *Lam.* 3. 33.

o 1 Cor. 10. 13. 2 Cor. 12. 9. 1 Cor. 15. 10. Phil. 4. 15.

3 Thirdly, he is alwaies ready to help and ſuccour ſuch as are diſtreſſed. Tis an inſeparable virtue from a righteous Prince, to relieve the oppreſſed, and by his power to help them to right, who have not power to right themſelves. *Hoc reges habent magnificum & ingens*, &c. *prodeſſe miſeris, et ſupplices fido lare protegere* p, &c. Herein doth the royalty of great men and rulers chiefly conſiſt, and for which the title of Gods is beſtowed upon them, that they are able to do good, and to ſuccour the afflicted more than others. *Job* demonſtrates his righteouſneſſe principally by his care of the poor, *I put on righteouſneſſe and it cloathed me, my judgement was as a robe and a diadem*, *Job*, 29. 44. But how doth it appear? I was (ſaies he) *eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, a father to the poore*, &c. *verſ.* 15. 16. This Jewell was never ſo orient in any ones Scepter as it is in Chriſts. You know what are his titles q of honour, a Father of the fatherleſſe, a Judge of the widowes, a helper unto him that hath no helper. He may be truely called (as *James* the fifth

p *Sen.* in Med. a. 2. f. 2.

q Pſal. 68. 5. 72. 12.

fifth of *Scotland* was) the poor mans King. Though *he inhabiteth eternity*, yet *he looks upon him that is poor, and of a contrite ſpirit, Iſai.* 66. 2. His boſome is an *Aſylum* or ſanctuary to thoſe that have no argument but poverty and miſery to uſe unto him, he deſpiſeth not the prayer of the deſtitute, *Pſal.* 102. 17. See *Pſal.* 34. 6. *The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him*, &c. *Pſal.* 145. 18, 19. His doores (like the Tribunes of *Rome*) are never ſhut, at all times and in all places [r] his eares are open unto their cry. [r] 1 Tim. 2. 8

Fourthly he takes notice of all the faithfull ſervices that are performed by his people. He is not like the great men of the world, who when their turne is ſerved, ſeek to ſhake off them that have been faithfull to them. Indeed good Kings will not; *Ahaſuerus* had his Chronicle to record the loyaly of his faithfull ſubjects, *Eſter*, 1. 2. *David* remembers the kindneſſe of *Jonathan* in his low eſtate, and rewards it in his ſeed. 2 *Sam.* 9. 1. So this King of Saints hath his book of remembrances for all the gracious words of his people. Nay, for their very thoughts, *Malac.* 3. 16. He remembers every *cup of cold water that hath been given for his names ſake*, God (ſaith the Apoſtle) *is not unrighteous to forget your work, and labour of love*, &c. though perhaps they themſelves had forgotten it, (as they that are mentioned, *Mat.*25.37 *Lord when ſaw we thee*, &c. yet Chriſt will not forget it. 4 Mat. 10.42. *Heb.*6. 10.

Fifthly and laſtly, He keeps his word and fulfils all his promiſes to his people. This is a principall part of righteouſneſſe. *Fides eſt fundamentum juſtitiæ*: Juſt and faithful, are ſynonima's in Scripture. 1 *Joh.* 1. 9 and the ſame word is rendered, truth and righteouſneſſe, to ſhew, that theſe virtues are inſeparable, and that he is not righteous, who is not true & faithful in keeping promiſe: Herein alſo doth the righteouſnes of Chriſt ſhew it ſelf, in his keeping promiſe & covenāt with them that truſt in him, his word ſtandeth faſt like the rocks & mountains which cannot be removed [s], they ſhall never be aſhamed that build upon it. He is not like unto other kings that deale by their Oathes and Proteſtations, as *Sampſon* with the Cords and Withes that bound him, who brake them in pieces like a thread of towe [t], there is 5 [s] Iſai. 54. 9, 10. 49. 23. [t] Judg. 16. 9.

is no hold to be taken in them, they verifie that of the Pſalmiſt. *Pſal.* 62. 9. *Men of high degree are a lye.* But now this king, though he can do all things, yet (ſaith the Apoſtle) *He cannot lie, nor deceive. Tit.* 1. 2. *Heb.* 6. 18. Of all that he hath promiſed to his ſervants, there ſhall not ſo much as a tittle faile [u] them. He is a God of Judgement (ſaith the prophet) *Juſt to keep and fulfill his promiſe*, and therefore bleſſed are all they that wait for him, *Iſai.* 30. 18. And thus much be ſpoken of the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt in reference to the Saints.

[u] Mat. 5. 18. Ioſh. 21. 45. 23. 14.

2 It remaines that we ſhould alſo ſhew you his righteous proceedings againſt his enemies, of which I can but ſpeak a word, leaſt I ſhould either ſtreighten my ſelfe in the Uſe, or be injurious to your publick affaires.

The Scepter wherewith he rules over wicked men, is quite of another nature; the former indeed was a golden Scepter, compoſed all of grace, mercy, gentleneſſe; but this is a rod of iron, wherewith he breaks and daſheth them in pieces as a Potters veſſell, *Pſal.* 2. 9. yet is this alſo a right and a ſtreight Scepter, all his judgements are juſt and equall which he inflicts upon them, *Rev.* 15. 3. 16. 5. 6. 7. He proceeds againſt wicked men by another rule, than that with which he governes the Saints, *ſci.* the Covenant of nature, or the law of works, his righteouſneſſe towards them is purely diſtributive, he rewards them according to their own works and deſervings, according to the number, nature and degrees of their ſinnes [x]. 1 He hath no reſpect unto perſons [y], to ſpare men either for their parts, greatneſſe or externall priviledges, but (ſaith the Apoſtle) *to every ſoul that doth evill will he render tribulation, wrath and anguiſh*, *Rom.* 2. 9. 2. Againe none of their wicked deeds ſhall be forgotten, he will ſet them all in order before them, *Pſal* 50. 21. though never ſo long ſince, or never ſo ſecretly committed, *Eccl.* 12. 14. their very thoughts and their words ſhall be brought to judgement, *Jude verſ.* 15. *Mat.* 12. 36. 3. To conclude he will weigh out their puniſhment in righteous ballances, every tranſgreſſion ſhall receive *a juſt recompence of reward*, *Heb.* 2. 2.

[x] Iſai. 59. 18.
[y] Rom. 2. 11.

Look

Look how much pleaſure in ſin, ſo much torment and ſorrow they ſhall receive. *Rev.* 18. 6, 7. 16. 6. I have done with the Doctrinall part, let me beg your attentions a little longer to the Application.

Uſe 1. Is the Scepter of Chriſts Kingdome a righteous Scepter? Let the Saints then be carefull to juſtifie their King in all his dealings. *How unſearchable are his judgements* [z], (ſaith the Apoſtle) but not unequall, for in the likelieſt preſumptions of injuſtice, he knowes the reaſon of his own proceedings; *righteouſneſſe* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *is the habitation of his throne, but clouds and darkneſſe are round about him* [a], he is righteous in all his waies, though the reaſon of his actings be hidden from us. And therefore in all his adminiſtrations, whether towards the Churches in generall, or towards our ſelves in particular, let us ſee that we juſtifie our King; as the Saints in former times, though they knew not how to unriddle the intricate miſteries of Divine providence, yet they were careful to aſcribe righteouſnes to the Author, though it were contrary to the dictates of ſence and reaſon, as *Jeremy*, *Righteous art thou, O Lord, when I plead with thee*, &c. *Chap.* 12. *verſ.* 1. and *David*, Pſal. 73. 1. *Truely God is good unto Iſrael*, &c. though his dealings with Iſrael were very ſtrange, ſee the following verſes. In like manner when we ſhall ſee him laying waſt his own vineyard, pulling down what he hath built, and rooting up what he hath planted, giving the dearly beloved of his ſoul into the hands of their enemies [b], let us take heed of concluding that his mercy is clean gon, or that his promiſe failes, that he hath laid aſide his care and providence of his people; Though now we ſee not, yet we ſhall ſee, that twas not without cauſe that he hath hid himſelfe [c]. *Princes* have their *arcana imperii*, ſecrets in government, which the vulgar ſort cannot dive into. No marvel then if this King alſo *hath his way in the ſea, and his path in the great waters* [d], but when ſence and reaſon is at a loſſe, Faith can bring us to an anchor. 'Tis not more certaine that there is a God in heaven, than that all the changes and afflictions of the Church ſhall work for her good, and that they

[z] Rom. 11. 33.
[a] Pſal. 92. 2.
[b] Ier. 12. 7.
[c] Ezek. 14. 23.
[d] Pſal. 77. 19. Iob. 28. 7.

ſhall all of them end in the glory of Chriſt, the enlargement of his kingdome, the ruine and deſtruction of all his enemies: Though in this his darker adminiſtrations there be ſomething *grievous*[e] to his own people, there is nothing *hurtfull*[f] but to his enemies. Seeing Chriſt himſelfe ſitts at the ſterne, and turnes all the wheels: in every change, we may be ſure, all winds ſhall drive unto this port, all the lines of providence, though they ſeem never ſo crooked in our eyes, ſhall certainely meet in this center: Though whilſt we look upon things aſunder, we would judge it otherwiſe, becauſe we ſee not their tendancy to this end, yet if we would but wait with patience, take the firſt & the laſt together, we ſhould behold admirable wiſdome in each particular. Tis in this caſe, as when a workman is cutting out a piece of rich ſtuff, he that ſtands by him & knows not his skill, will be ready to think he doth ſpoile and mar it, till he ſees all the pieces ſet together in a comely garment. And therefore let us not be haſty[g] in our ſpirits, or ſpeak unadviſedly with our lips, to blame either the wiſedome or the juſtice of this King of Saints, let us waite but till the pieces of providence are brought together, we ſhall then ſee the order and beauty of his righteous government, and that nothing that is done, could be left undone. 2 So in his harſheſt dealings with our ſelves in particular, when he ſeems to ſet himſelfe againſt us, and to make us the butts of his poiſoned arrowes[h], when he ſnatcheth away our friends, goods, children, *&c.* Let us take heed of raſh, impatient and unbelieving ſpeeches, ſuch as his were, *Pſal.* 77. 7. and 73. 13. we ſhould rather ſay with *Job.* I will lay my hand upon my mouth, *&c. Ch.* 40. 4, 5. Chriſtians ſhould not onely juſtifie him, as Creator, and as Judge of the world, who proceeds againſt his Creatures by a righteous Law, and exacts no more than their iniquities do deſerve. It becomes his people to aſcribe righteouſneſſe to him as he is King of Saints, that he deals with us by another rule, orders every event unto us in love, that he would never permit ſuch evills to befall us, did he not ſee them to be neceſſary, and that they are ſuch phyſick as we cannot want.

[e] Heb. 12. 11.
[f] Ier. 24. 9.
[g] Iſai. 28. 16.
[h] Iob. 6. 4.

In

In the next place (me thinks) theſe righteous adminiſtrations of Chriſts Kingdome ſhould be a powerfull inducement to all that are without, to come under his Scepter. The reaſon of mens ſtanding out, is from thoſe unjuſt prejudices and cavills which they have received againſt him; they look upon him as *a hard and auſteer maſter*, who requires much, and payes but little, as he *Matth* 25. 24. *I knew that thou art a hard man*, &c. and they, *Malac.* 3. 14. *What profit is it to ſerve the Lord?* &c. My friends believe not reports, but try your ſelves, and then ſpeak of him as you find. If he prove ſuch a hard maſter, or if waies be ſo grievous and unprofitable as is pretended, you'l be the better excuſed, if that you leave him. But theſe odious ſlanders, have been ſufficiently diſproved, you have now heard, that none have ſuch an eaſie profitable ſervice, as they that are the ſubjects of his kingdome: He requires no more than he will give them ſtrength to doe, and ſure I am there is no maſter that doth give ſuch wages. *Godlineſſe hath the promiſes of this life, and of that which is to come*[i], and for his performance, conſult the experiences of the Saints that have gone before us. *Joſh* 23. 14. To uſe but one argument more, if you will not take him to be your King, you muſt have him to be your Judge: they that will not come under his golden Scepter, they ſhall be broken in pieces with his iron rod. They muſt ſhortly come to be judged by that rigorous Law, which will not ſuffer the leaſt ſinne to goe unpuniſhed, or to receive a leſſe puniſhment than eternall death. But now the ſubjects of this Kingdome are freed from this mercileſſe judicatory, they *are not under the Law, but under Grace*[k], their inditements ſhall be taken up in another Court, though they have committed ſinnes, they ſhall be forgiven, they ſhall never beare any of thoſe puniſhments which their ſinnes deſerve.

Uſe 2.

[i] 1 Tim. 4. 8. Mat. 19. 29.

[k] Rom. 6. 14.

Thirdly, 'Tis matter of unſpeakable conſolation unto all the Saints, that the Scepter of their King is a righteous Scepter.

Uſe 3.

Object. But ſome will ſay what comfort is it to poor ſinfull

full creatures, that they have a juſt and righteous King? If he deale with us in a way of juſtice and righteouſneſſe, who can poſſibly be ſaved? *Pſal.* 130. 3. 143. 2.

Anſw. Beloved, you muſt know there is a great difference between the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, as he is Judge and Creator, and the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt as King of Saints. The former indeed is an affrighting, killing righteouſneſſe, but the latter is a fountaine of peace and comfort unto weary ſoules. The rule of the former is the Covenant of works, *Doe this and live, or faile of doing it and die*, proceeding by this rule, he rewards men according to *their own* works, and deſervings. But the rule of the latter, is his grace and mercy, he deals with his people according to *his own* deſervings, and what he hath merited in their behalfe; this righteouſneſſe is not oppoſed to mercy, but to the rigor, and ſeverity of the firſt Covenant, and therefore the Saints have dared to plead this righteouſneſſe, *Jer.* 10. 23. *Pſal.* 31. 1. his meaning is not deliver me, becauſe I have deſerved it, but becauſe thou haſt graciouſly promiſed whatſoever is good and neceſſary to thy ſervants; *according to thy righteouſneſſe* (*i. e.*) according to thy goodneſſe & faithfullneſſe[l]. The Septuag. doth frequently render righteouſneſſe by a word that ſignifies mercy or goodneſſe, as *Pſal.* 24. 5. 33. 5, *Dan.* 9. 16.

[l] *Juſtitia Dei eſt agere ſecundum condecentiam bonitatis aut veracitatis ſuæ*, Albert.

1. Now, firſt is it not ground of unſpeakable comfort unto all the Saints, that Chriſt is King of righteouſneſs? that he hath riches and treaſures of righteouſneſſe, anſwerable to that abundance and treaſures of ſinne that dwels in us? that he hath righteouſneſſe, not as a private perſon, but as a King, to diſpence and beſtow it upon his ſubjects? as he hath grace enough to ſupply our wants, ſo his office doth engage him to give it freely. His Kingly office was ordained for the ſupply of the wants and neceſſities of his ſubjects, as well as for their defence and preſervation, he is more willing[m] to beſtow his righteouſneſs on ſinners, than they can be to receive it.

[m] Pſ. 147. 11.

2. Secondly, Againe what a comfort is this, that we have ſuch a King as doth wholly mind and intend our good, that

that drives on no deſign but the welfare and happineſſe of his people, that imployes all his wiſdom, power, intereſt, for the proſperity of his Saints? *Pſal.* 35. 27.

3. Is it not a ſingular priviledge to have ſuch a King, that will not burthen his ſervants beyond their ſtrength, nor lay more upon them than they are able to bear; in a word, that gives them power to doe whatſoever he commands to be done? who would ever be weary of ſerving ſuch a Maſter, or think any thing grievous which he requires? 3

4. Is not this to a ſingular comfort, that his eye is alwayes upon us, that he deſpiſeth not, but graciouſly accepts our ſmalleſt offerings? ſurely it is a great encouragement to be ſincere in every ſervice, not to affect or ſeek after the praiſe of men [n], ſeeing that our righteous King takes notice of all that is done or ſuffered for his name ſake [o]? 4

[n] Ioh. 5. 44.
[o] Mat. 6. 4, 6, 18.

5. Laſtly, Is it not a precious ground of comfort, that we have to deal with ſuch a King, as is faithfull of his word, which we may reſt and build upon? Though men are deceitfull upon the ballances, yet he cannot deceive us, there ſhall not ſo much as one tittle fail of all that he hath promiſed to us; hence it is, that faith makes things that are to come as reall and ſubſtantiall [p] as if they were already preſent, and the Saints rejoyce in the hope of eternall life, as if they had the poſſeſſion of it [q]. 5

[p] Hebr. 11. 1.
[q] 1 Pet. 1. 8.

But fourth and laſt inference ſhall be a few words of exhortation to the Subjects of this righteous King, that they would labour to be like their Soveraign, *Righteous even as he is righteous.* Subjects generally are ambitious to imitate their leaders and ſuperiours [r]. I have read of a people that affected to halt becauſe their King was lame; Tis noted of *Ephraim*, that he willingly walked in the way of *Jeroboam*, *Hoſ.* 5. 11. St. *Auſtin* [s] obſerves it to be the policy of Sathan, that the worſt men amongſt the Heathens were accounted Gods, becauſe conſcience inſtructs men to be like their Gods. Shall others imitate the defects, and ſhall not we imitate

[r] *Obſequium in principem, & æmulandi amor validior quam pœna ex legibus, vel metus.* Tacit. Annal. l. 3.

[s] *Aſtutia ſatanæ quod peſſimi mortalium ab Ethnicis pro diis haberentur, ut diis ſuis conſimilari appeterent;* Aug. de civ. dei. l. 2. c. 10. *Summa religionis eſt imitari quem colis.* Ib. l. 8. c. 17.

tate the vertues and perfections of our King? Tis a shame that lewd and idolatrous examples should prevail with wicked men, more than the example of the Lord Jesus can doe with Christians.

We doe all professe our selves the people and subjects of this righteous King, but alas how little of his image is there stampt upon us? how few of us have learned from that grace that hath appeared to us, to live righteously? we may even take up the complaint of the Prophet, that righteousnesse hath left the earth, *Amos* 5. 7.

1. I am sure in these lower regions there is a great defect, where is the man that doth unto others as he would be done unto? or that hath any regard of his neighbours good, especially when it comes in competition with his own gain and advantage? how few are there that think any thing unlawfull which is safe and profitable, as if the Poets *quocumque modo rem*, were canonicall Scripture? was there ever so much fraud and deceit interwoven in mens dealings as now there is? or were there ever known so many suites, brabbles, and contentions, as now there are: witnesse the prolonging of your Assizes [t] to double the time they were wont to hold? Doe these things become the Subjects of a righteous King? Nay, doe they not cast a reproach upon his Scepter, and cause the word of righteousness, which is so generally professed, to be blasphemed.

[t] The Assizes in *Sarum* which were wont to be finished in two dayes, held almost four whole dayes, and yet (as I am informed) all the causes were not tri'd, although both Iudges when the Goal was ended, did hear causes.

2. It were to be wished, that the constellation of righteousnesse did shine more brightly in the higher orbes; Truly we meet with sad complaints in every corner, that the burthens of the Nation doe lie chiefly on the shoulders of the meaner sort, that they who have extraordinary gettings doe nothing proportionably to their incomes [u]; That great men Monopolize offices and places of profit, as bad as the Clergy heretofore did Church livings. That the reformation of our Lawes and Courts (which is so necessary [*] to the well being of this Sate) upon the matter

[u] Nehem. 3. 5.

[*] *Leges Angliæ plenæ sunt tricarum, ambiguitatum, sibiq; contrariæ, fuerint siquidem excogitatæ atq; sancitæ a Normannis, quibus nulla gens magis litigiosa, atque in controversiis machinandis, ac proferendis fallacior reperiri potest*, Philip. Honor.

hath

hath been but talk'd of: That in ſome of the late erected Courts and Offices, there are greater corruptions, and more onerous to the ſubject, than in any others, and particularly in the way of gathering the Exciſe, there are fearfull outcryes concerning this. That the Publick faith was never ſo ſhamefully violated in any Nation as it hath been amongſt us, ſome being forc'd to ſell away their debts accrewing upon loan and ſervice at inconſiderable rates, for 18, or 20, *d. per. lib.* and what advantage ſome have ſuckt from hence is ſufficiently known: others who have been promiſed reparation of their ſufferings for the publick cauſe are little minded, though they and their families are brought unto a morſell of bread. This and much more is every where muttered, and I wiſh from my heart it could be denied.

For my own part, I am but a little acquainted with great mens actions, this I know, they are all of them ſubject unto great temptations, they ſtand *in ſlippery places* [x]; which as it ſhould make us all the more earneſt with the Lord for them [y]; ſo more eſpecially ought we that are Miniſters to deale the more plainly when we ſpeak unto them, and with a godly jealouſie put them in remembrance, what poor low things the honours and riches of the world are, what great opportunities are put into their hands, and what a ſtrict account muſt be made to God of their mannage of them.

[x] Pſal. 73. 18.
[y] 1 Tim. 2. 1, 2.

And I would to God that thoſe watchmen, who ſtand in the high places of the Land, that are the ſeers to our great men in Parliament, Army, and City, did more frequently put them in mind, what engagements to righteouſneſſe doe lie upon them, that they would often alarum them as *Moſes* doth his Iudges, *Deut.* 16. 20. *Juſtice, Juſtice* [*], *ſhalt thou doe.* For if any of them ſhould now make it their chief buſineſſe to build their own houſes, and to ſet their neſts amongſt the ſtars [z], to inrich themſelves with the publick ruines; If after all their humiliations, and prayers, their ſolemn vowes and proteſtations in their low eſtate, the (almoſt) infinite deliverances they have received; If, I ſay, after all theſe and many more obligati-

[*] Hebr.
[z] Obad. v. 4.

ons,

ons, any of them should so far forget God, as to stretch forth their hands to violence, and to smite with the fist of wickednesse, use that power to oppresse which is given them to relieve the oppressed, nay, if they doe not the work which they are called unto, God will surely judge them, their punishment shall be sevenfold greater than any of those that have gone before them, because greater engagements doe lie upon them, and surely *God will not hold them guiltlesse that doe take his Name in vain*[a].

[a] Exod. 20.7.

Tis my soules desire, that all that have any power in the Nation may use it righteously, that this whole Land were a habitation of justice, and a City of righteousnesse[b].

[b] Isai. 1. 26.

O that the Lord would powerfully perswade their hearts that are in eminent places, to doe justly, love mercy, and to walk humbly with their God[c]; That as they professe themselves the subjects, so they would approve themselves the followers of Jesus Christ. And

[c] Mich. 6. 8.

First, By their zeal for the righteousnesse of God, that which makes sinners righteous in the sight of God; They will never be righteous towards men, who are not cloathed with this righteousnesse in the sight of God[d]. For how can they be just men that are not good men, or that are not such from an inward principle? there is no vertue in truth which doth not spring from faith[e], or a conscience sprinckled with the bloud of Christ. And therefore Magistrates more especially ought to put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and to account his righteousnesse their robe and diademe, this would cause them to be eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame, and it would make them conscientious and spirituall in all their duties. And here I could wish, that the zeal of our Rulers and great men did shew it self more

[d] See *Hooker's* Eccles. Pol. l. 5. s. 1.

[e] *Fides omnium virtutum fundamentum.* Prosp. *vita sancta a fide sumit initium.* Fulgent. Chrisost. calls faith μητέρα καὶ πηγὴν ἁπάντων χαρισμάτων. H

In receiving the word of righteousnesse with all meeknesse and reverence, *even as the word of God*[f]. The most forceable meanes that Magistrates can use to propagate the Gospel, is to obey it themselves, and to exalt its authority in their own soules; Their examples are powerfull attractives[g], have greater force upon the common

[f] 1 Thes. 2. 13.

[g] See 1 King. 3. 15. 30. 16. 19. Gal. 2. 13, 14.

people

people than penall Statutes; If they ſee their Rulers and Governours imbracing the truth with ſuitable affections, giving honour to the Goſpel by their reverent attending upon the preaching of it, and their exemplary obedience to the power of it, it ſtrikes an awe upon their ſpirits, if it work no more; we read, *Acts* 18. 8. that *when* Criſpus *the chief Ruler believed, many of the* Corinthians *believed alſo.* But if they ſhall ſlight and diſcountenance this Ordinance of God, nay, if they attend to it but in a careleſſe oſcitant manner, if they uſe it but as a form and ceremony, the vulgar ſort will abhorre it.

I wiſh it were ſeriouſly conſidered by the godly-wiſe, whether that ſtate and theatricall pomp [h], which is ſometimes uſed at theſe ſolemnities be ſuitable to the ſimplicity and ſpiritualneſſe of Gods worſhip, and whether it be conſiſtent with that fear and reverence which ſhould here be ſhewn by the greateſt perſons. Might I ſpeak my thoughts (and I know not why I ſhould not in a caſe of this nature, which ſo nearly concernes the purity of Gods worſhip) I muſt profeſſe, that I cannot but rank it in the number of thoſe Ceremonies, which doe rather darken than adorn the worſhip of God.

[h] μετὰ πολλῆς φαντασίας, Act. 25. 23.

In their civill Courts we heartily wiſh, that their ſtate were far greater, that the ſplendor and magnificence of their Thrones did darken *Solomons.* But ſure in the Church their ordinary habits, and moſt humble deportment, would beſt become them; on the Bench let them appear as Gods, but in the Church as men [i], who are but duſt and aſhes, ready to hear what the great God ſhall ſay unto them; heretofore when the King himſelf came in place, the inferiour Magiſtrate reſing'd up the badges of his authority, whether it were Mace, Sword, &c. and is it not as reaſonable, that when men come before the King of Heaven and Earth, their enſignes of Majeſty ſhould be laid aſide? Tis obſerved of *Heſter*, that when ſhe went to *Ahaſhuerus* ſhe put on her royall apparell, but when ſhe comes unto God, ſhe puts on ſack-cloth; Though the Kings of Iſrael (who were types of Chriſt) were allow'd to ſit in the

[i] See 2 Theſ. 2. 4.

Temple [k], yet usually we find them standing, 1 *King.* 8. 22, 55. and 2 *Chron.* 6. 12, 13. Tis apparent that they used not that state in the Temple that they had upon the Throne [l]; we read of *Constantine* the great, that having stood whole houres in hearing the Word, the Bishop that preach'd desired him to sit, he replied, *Nefas videri institutis de Deo disputationibus aures præbere negligentes* [m]: Tis prophecied *Rev.* 21. 24. That *Kings shall bring their glory and honour to the Church*, (*i. e.*) they shall count it their greatest honour, that they are Members of it; *Rulers* are exhorted to serve the Lord with fear, &c. *Psal.* 2. 11. though inward reverence be the chief and principall, yet the same ought to be testified outwardly by suitable gestures; The Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 11. 4, 7. seems to me to forbid all such acts and gestures in prayer and preaching, as derive any honour or authority to our selves, as the covering of the head; which as *Beza* well observes, cannot be referred onely to him that utters the prayer, or expounds the Scripture, but to the whole assembly which doth joyn in that duty, for though but one doth speak, yet the action is common, all the congregation may be said to pray or prophecy; as 1 *King.* 8. 62. it is said, that *the King and all Israel did offer sacrifice*, though the Priests did doe it: Again, those actions are there ascrib'd unto women also, who could no otherwise be said to pray or prophecy, than by being in the Church whilst these duties were perform'd, for women might not speak in the congregation, 1 *Cor.* 14. 34. 1 *Tim.* 2. 11, 12. Now if mens covering their heads in these sacred duties were thought by the Apostle inconsistent with the reverence that is due to them, much lesse ought such pompous and magnificent shews be allowed of in our Christian assemblies. It cannot be denied, but that it occasions exceeding much disorder, and many distractions in our congregations [n], and oftentimes becomes a snare unto them, who in this place should know no power but his that sent them.

2. By their stedfastnesse and perseverance in the doctrine of imputed righteousnesse, or of justification by Christ

[k] Neque enim videndi locum est in templo, nisi regibus familiæ Davidis tantum: Skickard ex majin de jur. Reg. Heb. p. 94. See 2 Chron. 6. 9.

[l] Euseb. in vit. Constant. l. 4.

[n] On the Lords dayes, the people of all the adjacent Congregations in Town and Country, doe generally flock together to see these pompous shews of whom some hundreds doe not so much as go into the Church to hear the word preached.

Christ alone. Tis sad to consider how many eminent Professors, whose names have been famous throughout the Churches, are turn'd aside to vain notions, and to another Gospel[o], to vilifie that Christ which died, rose again, and ascended into heaven to make intercession for us, in comparison of a Christ which hath no existence at all, but in their own fancies; Is there any other name under heaven given whereby we can be saved[p], besides the Lord our righteousnesse? and have not the Saints alwayes accounted their own righteousnesse (though wrought by the strength and assistance of the holy Spirit) to be but dung and filthy rags in comparison of his? see *Isai.* 64. 6. *Phil.* 3. 8, 9. *Isa.* 45. 24, 25.

[o] Gal. 1. 6.

[p] Act. 4. 12. Ier. 23. 6.

3. In countenancing and protecting the Preachers of this righteousnesse; we crave not their power to force our doctrine upon mens consciences, or to cut off them that doe oppose us[q]. But 1. to allow us liberty by preaching and reasoning[r] to convince gainsayers, and such as doe oppose the truth, and in doing our duties to protect us from the rage and violence of unruly people. And 2. that our just reproofes of great mens sins be not interpreted medling in State affaires.

[q] For which some have impertinently alledged *Galat.* 5. 12.

[r] Which is a Ministers duty no less than preaching, *Tit.* 1. 9. see the Apostles practice, *Act.* 6. 9. 29. 17. 2. and v. 17, 18 c. 4. 19. 19. c. 8, 9. verses.

Secondly, By making him their pattern in civill righteousnes, by becoming such unto their Subjects as he is unto his: And

1. That they would make it their greatest design to seek the peoples welfare, remembring that Rulers were not ordained for their own, but for the good of those that are under them. Let them leave the care of their own houses unto God; We read of the Hebrew Midwives, that because they feared God, therefore *God built them houses*, *Exod.* 1. 21. those houses shall continue longest which are built by God, and not by violence and oppression. *Better is a little* (saith Solomon) *with righteousnesse, than great revenewes without right*, *Prov.* 16. 8. Memorable is the practise of the Jewes, that when they had power over their adversaries, and the spoil of their enemies was given to them, *Ester* 8. 11. yet (saies the text) *upon the prey they laid not their hands*,

[c] Fuller holy Warre, b. 3. c. 29. ex Sabel.

chap. 5. 25. And of *Saladine* in the Turkiſh ſtory[c], before whoſe Hearſe it was proclaimed, Saladine *the Conquerour of the Eaſt hath gotten nothing by all his victories but this black ſhirt*, which was then carried before him; will not ſuch examples be a ſhame unto many Chriſtians, who let ſlip no opportunity of gain that is given to them?

2. That they would, as much as is poſſible, eaſe them of their burthens, at leaſt make their yoke to be lighter by a more equall diſtribution of the common taxes. The people generally doe not complain ſo much of their payments, as of the diſproportion and inequality of laying them. Commiſſioners and Aſſeſſors in many places are exceedingly blam'd, that they aſſume an arbitrary power contrary to the Act; that they make uſe of their authority to eaſe themſelves, friends and kindred, and to ſhift off their burthens upon other mens ſhoulders. That though the Parliament have taken off a fourth part of the tax, their Aſſeſments in ſome places are as great as they were before: It were a worthy work to ſearch out this matter, and to put them to ſhame that ſhall be found guilty.

3. That they would ſuffer their eares to be open to the cries of the poor, ſuch as have no friend to rely upon, but the juſtneſſe of their cauſe; *The righteous* (ſaith Salomon) *will conſider the cauſe of the poor, though the wicked doe not regard it*, *Prov.* 29 7. Great men ſhould be like our great High-Prieſt, who is *toucht with a feeling of his peoples infirmities*, *Heb.* 4. 15. It may be others that ſhould relieve them, are the perſons that doe oppreſſe and wrong them.

4. That they would remember them that have been faithfull to them; Indeed if any that have ſerv'd them have out of diſcontent and peeviſhneſſe gone about to deſtroy the things which they themſelves have wrought, tis but juſt, that their former righteouſneſſe ſhould be forgotten[t]; Thoſe benefits of inferiors are wrongs and injuries to them that are over them, which make the mind onely capable of merrit, and nothing of duty. But of them that are conſtant, that have ſtuck to them cloſeſt in their greateſt need, it were great pity that any labour of love ſhould be forgotten.

[t] Ezek. 18. 24.

5. That

5. That they would be carefull to performe all their promiſes, that their people might build upon them as a ſure foundation; The words of Chriſtian Magiſtrates eſpecially ſhould be like the Lawes of the *Medes* and *Perſians*, which might not be broken[u]. Breach of promiſe in mean ones is a foul ſhame, but in great men, like the Eclipſe of the Sun, which is alwayes fatall. [u] Dan. 6. 8. 12. 15.

6. And laſtly, That in the diſtribution of puniſhments they would be like unto Chriſt, have no reſpect of perſons, the greater any offenders are, the fitter objects are they for juſtice, which as it would derive moſt glory to Magiſtrates, ſo would it ſtrike the greateſt terror into evill doers. Murder is a ſin that cannot be pardoned by man, *whoſoever ſheddeth mans bloud*, &c. *Gen.* 9. 6. neither King nor Parliament ſhould pardon Murder, and if the acceſſary deſerve death, much more the principall.

It were to be wiſhed there were ſome additionalls to the Act of adultery, which as it now ſtands, is made but a meer ſcar-crow, for though proofes may not be ſo full and cleer, as to reach the life (which I conceive are impoſſible to be had, without the parties confeſſion *) yet there are other degrees of uncleanneſſe, which are iniquities to be puniſhed by the Judge; ſee an inſtance (if you pleaſe) *Deut.* 25. 12. No ſort of offenders not capital, do deſerve ſeverer niſhment, than corrupt Officers and Miniſters about our Courts of juſtice, who (as one[x] cals them) are *tineæ forenſes*, the States moaths, more pernitious to a Commonwealth than high-way theeves, becauſe the trade they drive is *furtum colore juſtitiæ palliatum*, a kind of legall theft, uſing the Lawes which ſhould protect, as engines to torture the ſimple countrey people. Were *Tiberius*'s [y] example followed, and but ſome of them, when their fraud is found, ſeverely puniſhed, the reſt would feare. I ſhall conclude this point with that of the *Pſalmiſt Pſal.* 106. 3. *Bleſſed are they that keep judgement and do righteouſneſſe at all times.*

* Witneſſe Carpenter's caſe tryed at *Sarum* this laſt Aſſize. And Webb's caſe before, ſee Mr. Stokes's WilſhireRant.

[x] Bp. Andrews Spittle Serm.

[y] *Pauci admodum vi tractati, cæteris quies erit.* Tacit. Ann. l. 1.

I hoped to have diſpatched the other point alſo, which was iſſued from the limitation or reſtriction of this property.

That

Doct. 2. *That Righteouſneſſe is proper and peculiar unto Chriſt's Kingdome.*

But (that I may not wrong your patience) we will wave the Doctrine, and ſhut up all with a word of Uſe.

If righteouſneſſe doth belong peculiarly to the Scepter of *Jeſus Chriſt*, let us not expect ſo much from humane governments: we muſt not look to have a Common-wealth ſo perfectly reformed, and ſo exactly governed, but there will be many diſorders. For if the governments of the moſt virtuous Princes we ever read of, were ſo many waies faulty, as we find they were; as not onely of *Auguſtus*, *Titus*, *Trajan*, who were held to be patterns of upright dealing [a], but of *David*, *Salomon*. *Aſa*, &c. who were men after Gods own heart, and whoſe Laws and manner of government, were of his appointing, can we reaſonably look for ſuch governours or government, againſt which there can be no exception? if in farre leſſer Polities there do happen ſo many confuſions and diſorders, as we ſee there do, in the government of Townes, Corporations, Families, &c. can it be avoided but in theſe great bodies there will be many corruptions, wherein ſo many ſubordinate officers muſt needs be truſted? Nay if in the government of the Church (which is a Kingdome of Saints [b]) there are ſo many miſcarriages, as we find there have been, even in the firſt and pureſt Churches, can we hope it ſhould be better in the Kingdoms of the world? ſeeing not onely Governours themſelves, but the Lawes they rule by, are many waies faulty and vitious [c]. For which cauſe *Luther* compares the Lawes of men to a beggers coat [d], which muſt be daily patch't and piec'd, to make it hang together. If this rule were ſtreight and perfect, what need ſo many additions, explanations, alterations, and repeales, as are made in our Laws. Now if the rule be crooked can the work which is done by it be ſtreight? And therefore the greateſt ſtates-men amongſt the Heathens, as *Plato*, and *Cicero*, have concluded, that kingdomes cannot be governed with-

[a] *Plin. Paneg. Trajan. dict.*

[b] Exod. 19. 6.

[c] *Nulla enim uſquam ſunt leges, quæ caveant vitia, nec ulli uſquam ſunt reges qui ſine injuſtitia regant* Luth. in Pſal. 45.

[d] *Leges civiles ſunt quaſi mendici pallium. Ib.*

out much injuſtice. As the work of ſanctification in ſingle perſons, ſo the reformation of States and Kingdomes, will never be perfect in this life.

The righteouſneſſe of earthly Rulers, doth not conſiſt in *Puncto Mathematico*, but in *Puncto phiſico*, 'tis praiſe-worthy if they come within the circumference, though they do not reach the Center [e]. The moſt that can be look't for, is to have ſuch Rulers as do not wittingly decline from juſtice, that do their utmoſt endeavour to do right to all, that are willing and ready to reforme whatſoever is found amiſſe.

[e] *In materia morali punctum debet conſtitui magnitudine duorum paſſuum, circumferentia autem magnitudine alicujus oppidi.* Luth.

Thoſe perfectiſts that will beare with no defects or failings in civill governments, are as wide in Politiques, as the *Novatians* were in Chriſtianity, who ſtood for a perfection of ſanctification, and held that no ſinne was pardonable after baptiſme. *Luther* [f] tells us of ſome Rulers that were put to death at *Erford* becauſe they affected to be juſt 8, not conſidering that there is a devill in the world: they that will beare with no infirmities or miſcarriages in thoſe that are ſet over them, muſt needs (as the Apoſtle ſpeakes in another caſe) go out of the world, and take up their dweling in ſome *Utopia*. As there ought to be an *Initium* [h] a great deale of forbearance and moderation in rulers towards their people, ſo the ſame affection ſhould be in the people towards their rulers, they ſhould not be extream to mark what is done amiſſe, much leſſe for ſome leſſer miſcarriages, go about to remove them, and to throw off the yoake from off their ſhoulders, 'twas never ſeen, but they, who on this pretence, have attempted ſuch changes, when they have held the Scepter, they have mannag'd it worſe, compare 2 *Sam.* 15. 4. with *Chap.* 16. 22.

[f] *Vidi aliquot Erfurdiæ ſic regere, ut ſuſpenderentur & plecterentur capite, quia præſumebant ſpeculative regere, & neſciebant Diabolũ eſſe in medio.* in Pſ. 45.

[g] Eccl. 7. 16.

[h] *Eſt juris moderatio.* Bez.

If thou ſeeſt the oppreſſion of the poor (ſaies *Salomon*) *do not marvel at the matter.* Eccleſ. 5. 8. (*q. d.*) 'tis no ſuch ſtrange matter, it cannot be expected but many diſorders will happen in the governments of men; which if they are not willfull, ought to be born with and covered over with the mantle of love.

Yet it is meet that magiſtrates, as well as others, ſhould be

be dealt faithfully withall, 'twere hatred to ſuffer them to lie
Lev. 19. 17. in their ſinnes without reproofe [i], which (ſaies *Luther*) ought to be given them by Miniſters *libere & aperte, ſed tamen modeſte*, freely and openly, but yet with due reſpect unto their yeares and places.

And though there be not perfection in this life, yet that hinders not, but that they ought to preſſe forward, and to get as near to it as they can, for as private Chriſtians are
2 Pet. 3. 18. *to grow in grace* [k], and
Eph. 4. 13. *never give over till they have attained unto the meaſure of the ſtature of Chriſt* [l], ſo ſhould magiſtrates increaſe in righteouſneſſe, and daily endeavour that their Scepters, may be more and more like unto the Scepter of Chriſt. The defects and imperfections of humane governments, is no ground to tolerate manifeſt evills, or to connive at any thing that ſhall be found amiſſe. 'Tis but a ſin of infirmity, to ſuffer evills which are not known, but no leſſe than rebellion, to allow of any thing which we know to be unrighteous. They that go fartheſt in reformation do yet come ſhort, there will be roome for endeavourers, as long as we live, and therefore Chriſtians ſhould never deſiſt, or acquieſce in any meaſure that they have attained to, till they have reacht the Coppy that is ſet before them, and are made *perfect even as their heavenly father is perfect* [m], *Mat.* 5. 48.

[m] *Præſens vita negat, vita futura dabit.* Bern. Gilp.

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FINIS.